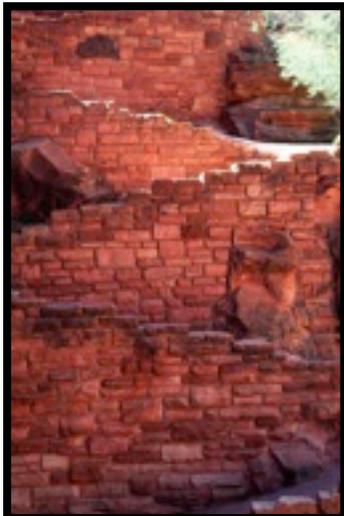


# backcountry images



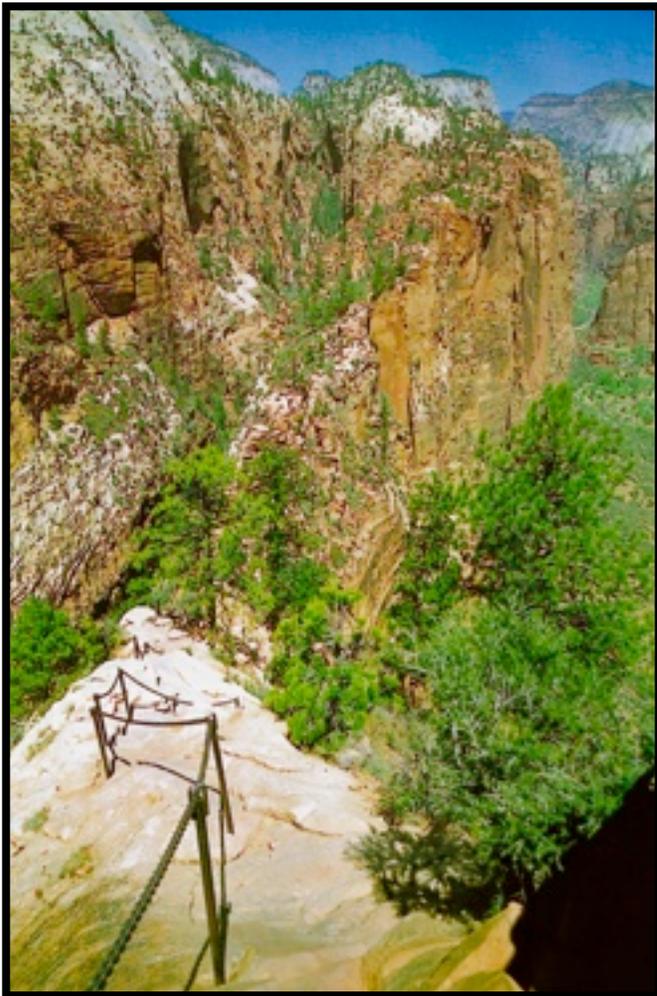
## Angel's Landing

Angels Landing is one of the world's great hikes - perhaps the best short adventure hike in any US national park. It provides amazing views of Zion Canyon. Physically, this hike isn't that challenging. Virtually anyone in average physical condition can make the trek. But it is mentally challenging because the final leg is very steep, with sheer drop-offs



As a resource for quality landscape and nature photography, [backcountryimages.com](http://backcountryimages.com) is proud to launch this series of Photo and Travel Guides to help fellow photographers discover new and classic locations. These guides will provide accurate and up to date information, and a sampling of my favorite images.

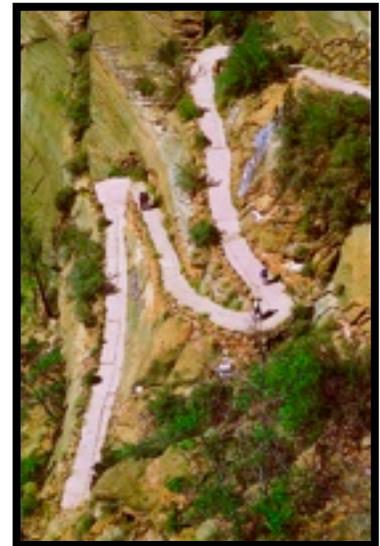
# Angel's Landing



The trailhead is at the bridge across the road of the Grotto Picnic Area, in Zion Canyon. The first part of the hike follows the West Rim Trail, which is clearly identified by a sign. The trail is broad and well maintained.

Switchbacks allow the trail to climb the canyon wall, up to Refrigerator Canyon. That canyon is pleasantly cool, scenic, and walking is easy. The trail then climbs another series of switchbacks, called Walter's Wiggles. These 21 switchbacks are very tight and you gain elevation rapidly, but this section is short and not oppressive. The Wiggles put you on top of the ridge, at Scout Lookout, where views are amazing. Restrooms are available here, but no drinking water. From Scout Lookout, gaze at the ridge to the south and you'll get a good idea of the difficulty of the rest of the hike.

For the final 1/2 mile, the trail follows the ridge across a saddle and up the hogs back. This is where things get interesting, steep, where you are grateful for the chains.

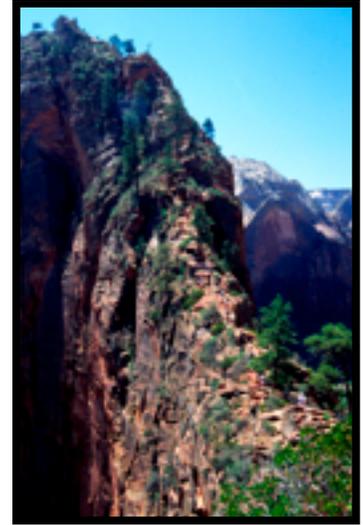


## GPS coordinates:

Scout Lookout: N 37° 16.387', W 112° 57.023  
Angels Landing: 37° 16.16', 112° 56.92'

## Fear of Heights

Psychiatrists will tell you that acrophobia is an extreme or irrational fear of heights. It is in the category of phobias dealing with space and motion discomfort. Acrophobia is a manifestation of the mind, usually attributed to a traumatic experience involving heights. In contrast, scientists have also suggested that a fear of heights is instinctual in most mammals. It is a natural survival instinct that has helped preserved our species. My question is, how much fear has to overcome you before you shift from instinct to phobia? For me, the Angels Landing Trail in Zion National Park helped clarify this distinction. As I found myself being challenged by the vertical intensity of this trail, my hike became a test of my fortitude, a psychological drama played out in my head, a contest between phobia and instinct.



## Weather

Best hiked in spring, summer and fall. Summer afternoons are very hot but mornings are pleasant.. Ice makes the trail extremely dangerous in winter. Don't hike during thunderstorms because of danger from lightning. Drinking water and restrooms are available at the Grotto. Carry water and snacks. Use a small backpack so your hands are free to hold the chains.

## Photography Tips & Information

Since the trail is challenging, and you want to have your hands free, I recommend a small backpack, sling bag. or large waist pack for your gear. There isn't much need for a long telephoto, so I carry my Nikon 70-300 for more flexibility and lighter weight. I carry two wide angle zooms for hikes like this - the 12-24 mm and the 24-120 mm.